

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-09

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FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO

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E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: USEGJC

SUBJECT: US COMMISSION -- JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL

REF: STATE 18780

1. PLEASED TO HEAR THAT MR. THOMAS MURPHY HAS AGREED TO SERVE AS HEAD OF AMERICAN SIDE OF PROPOSED US-EGYPTIAN COUNCIL.

2. THERE HAS BEEN NO MOVEMENT ON THIS FROM EGYPTIAN SIDE. AHMAD EFFAT WAS INITIALLY DESIGNATED TO HEAD EGYPTIAN SIDE, BUT FOLLOWING COMMENT MADE BY PARSKY DURING HIS LAST VISIT EXPRESSING PREFERENCE THAT SOMEONE FROM EGYPTIAN PRIVATE SECTOR WOULD HEAD EGYPTIAN SIDE, EFFAT'S DESIGNATION IS IN LIMBO. EGYPTIAN PROBLEM IS, OF COURSE, THAT (A) THERE ARE NO PRIVATE EGYPTIAN BUSINESSMEN OF MURPHY'S CALIBER OR EXPERIENCE AND (B) MOST OF EGYPTIAN BUSINESS IS HANDLED THROUGH PUBLIC SECTOR. AMBASSADOR IS MEETING WITH HEGAZI FEB 5 AND WILL AT THAT TIME SOUND OUT PRIMIN ON HIS CURRENT THINKING.

3. SO FAR AS THE FUNCTIONS OF THE COUNCIL IS CONCERNED, WE RECALL CONCEPT WAS INITIALLY BROACHED BY PRESIDENT NIXON DURING HIS JUNE, 1974 VISIT. HIS CONCEPT APPEARED TO BE TO ESTABLISH SOMETHING SIMILAR TO US-SOVIET BUSINESS COUNCIL. WE HERE ARE NOT FULLY AWARE OF WHAT THAT COUNCIL DOES, BUT

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THIS INFORMATION PRESUMABLY AVAILABLE IN DEPT.,

COMMERCE AND ELSEWHERE. OUR INITIAL THOUGHTS ON THE SUBJECT
WERE SET FORTH IN PARA 3-B OF CAIRO'S 4859 (JULY 5, 1974). WE
HAD ALSO BEEN UNDER THE IMPRESSION THAT FUNCTIONS OF SUCH A
COUNCIL HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH EGYPTIAN IN WASHINGTON DURING
THE AUG 1974 ECONOMIC TALKS AND PERHAPS SUBSEQUENTLY AS WELL.

4. SINCE ABOVE UNDERSTANDING MAY NOT BE CORRECT, WE ARE
CURRENTLY SOUNDING OUT EGYPTIAN CONTACTS TO GET THEIR READING OF
WHAT ROLE SUCH A JOINT BUSINESS COUNCIL MIGHT USEFULLY PLAY.
THERE MAY BE SOME OVERLAP BETWEEN ITS FUNCTIONS AND THOSE
OF JEW ON ECONOMIC INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT, BUT THE
TWO OUGHT FOR THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE AT LEAST COMPLEMENT
EACH OTHER. WILL SUBMIT OUR CONSIDERED THINKING ASAP, BUT
PROBABLY NOT UNTIL WE ARE OUT FROM UNDER THE RASH OF OFFICIAL
AND UNOFFICIAL DELEGATIONS EXPECTED HERE IN THE NEXT TWO
WEEKS. PREPARING FOR AND SERVICING THEM IS IN ONE WAY
OR ANOTHER TYING UP MOST OF OUR OFFICER
PERSONNEL.
EILTS

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